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RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC//JF/UNMA//
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RHMFIISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFIISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUMICEA/JICCENT MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFIIU/COMSOCENT MACDILL AFB FL
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2588
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 2741
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 6015
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 1410

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 002471

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/FO (JGASTRIGHT), SA/A, S/CR, SA/PAB,
S/CT, EUR/RPM
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG
NSC FOR AHARRIMAN, KAMEND
OSD FOR BREZINSKI
CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-76, POLAD
REL NATO/AUST/NZ/ISAF

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PTER AF

SUBJECT: PRT/PAKTIKA Q JOURNEY TO WAZA KHWA Q
PROJECTS, AND GOVERNANCE IN SOUTHERN PAKTIKA

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(SBU) SUMMARY: An early May overland journey from Paktika's capital Sharana through the districts of Khair Kot, Jani Khel, and Waza Khwa in southern Paktika province revealed districts bereft of improved roads, infrastructure, and effective Afghan government influence. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) PRT Sharana conducted a eight day overland trip to remote districts in southern Paktika to meet key leaders, conduct medical assistance visits and inspect ongoing building projects. The trip, while providing medical care for over 1200 people, also gave the PRT DOS representative the opportunity to meet local leaders and the PRT engineer the opportunity to inspect five building projects in Khair Kot, Jani Khel, and Waza Khwa districts. The medical side of the trip provided positive medical and dental service to the Afghan people, many of whom had likely never before seen a qualified medical professional. The leader engagements revealed significant shortages of resources and staffing for the district government offices, and project inspections demonstrated deficiencies in nearly all the construction projects.

Government Reach Stretched

¶3. (SBU) The Afghan government lacks capacity in

PaktikaQs southern districts. Waza Khwa district center, reached after a hot and dusty seven hour, seventy mile, bone jarring ride from Sharana over unmarked desert tracks, is a small mud town of little distinction aside from the small American military outpost located on its outskirts. Situated in an important border province in AfghanistanQs southeastern Pashtun homeland and along infiltration routes from Pakistan, the desert district of Waza Khwa is typical of many remote districts in south and central Paktika. Perhaps most revealing of its remoteness from central governmentQs influence was the discovery that the main currency in exchange in Waza KhwaQs market was the Pakistani rupee. Afghan currency was not in evidence and only U.S. dollars or rupees were accepted in most shops. Discussions with the two resident Afghan government leaders, the district commissioner Kadirgul Zadran and chief of police Ahmed Wahid Watak revealed the reach of the Afghan government to be quite limited in this remote area. With only two operational Toyota pickups, no telephones, no radios, no electricity, and functioning with only rudimentary offices in mud buildings, the chief of police and district commissioner are at best able to control only a small part of their district. Support from the central government is nearly nonexistent and what has been made available suffers greatly from inefficiency and apparently corruption.

Project Inspection Reveals Lack of Oversight and Likely Corruption

¶4. (SBU) In projects in Khair Kot, Jani Khel, and Waza Khwa districts, contractors were observed using

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inferior materials including weak concrete block and poorQuality concrete columns and beams. The use of substandard materials and incorrect mix ratios produced concrete which is extremely weak, crumbly, and completely unsuitable for its intended structural purpose. This is especially true in the construction of the new government center buildings in Waza Khwa, which the Afghan government is supposed to be funding and supervising. These Afghan Stabilization Program (ASP) buildings under construction for well over a year are nowhere near completion and are so poorly constructed that they likely pose a real danger of collapsing on any future occupants.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Waza Khwa, Khair Kot and Jani Khel are remote and undeveloped districts. The district commissioners and chiefs of police, usually the only representatives of the Afghan government in the districts, lack the resources to effectively govern. The planned construction by U.S Army engineers this year of a road from Sharana to Waza Khwa will help to open up these remote districts. However, the lack of resources for the local government agencies and the apparent government negligence and likely corruption in the construction of the ASP government center project in Waza Khwa is disturbing. Despite these problems these districts are not in imminent danger of falling to Taliban/insurgent forces. Rather they are simply not going to make much forward movement until the Afghan government commits sufficient resources - both manpower and materiel - to provide good governance and to decisively dominate the environment. These districts need reliable telecommunications and roads to tie them to the rest of Afghanistan. They also need honest professional administrators, equipped with proper offices and equipment, committed to extending the reach of the Karzai government and the

rule of law. Until this commitment is made these districts will remain frontier regions where KabulOs rule will remain weak. End Comment.

NEUMANN